ISLÂHUL-AKHLÂQ (CORRECTION OF CHARACTER)

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Reformation of Character

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Foreword

(Hazrat Maulana) Muhammad Akhtar (May Allah Ta'ala forgive him) explains, "Allah Ta'ala states, "Successful is he who has purified his Nafs and unsuccessful is the one who does not purify it (due to laziness and neglect)." Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has stated that the purification (tazkiyah) of the Nafs is Fardh-e-ayn (compulsory). He has also said that tazkiyah is a transitive verb (فعل متعدى) from which we learn that it is not such a verb which becomes complete with its fa'ail (doer of the action) as is the specialty of an intransitive verb (فعل لازم). Therefore, there is a need of a muzakki¹ who will make one's tazkiyah and tarbiyat (nurturing and reformation). No person can therefore reform himself. There is an extreme necessity for a spiritual guide. Since the muqaddimah (precedent) of a fardh is also fardh, it is therefore fardh to seek a spiritual guide and to attain his companionship. However, as long as man does not possess the knowledge of praiseworthy character (Akhlâq-e-Hamîdah) and evil character (Akhlâq-e-Razilah), he will not be able to recognize good and evil; but in fact, will regard evil to be good and good to be evil. Similarly, some people go to the saintly ones, but they do not acquire recognition of evil characteristics and the sickness of the heart from them. So, unfortunately, years pass in their company, yet they remain unmindful and unconcerned about their own reformation.

For this reason, one sincere friend, Maulana Muhammad Zubair Saheb, requested this lowly one to compile a concise book on praiseworthy and evil character, which would also be easy to distribute amongst friends. Due to the sincerity of Maulana, Allah Ta'ala granted this lowly one the ability to compile this booklet

¹ One who purifies the heart.

entitled "Islâhe Akhlâq" (Reformation of Character). May Allah Ta'ala out of His mercy accept it and make it beneficial for all. Ameen

(Hazrat Maulana) **Muhammad Akhtar** (May Allah Ta'ala forgive him)



The crux of sulook is:

Evil character should be removed, noble character should be inculcated, negligence of Allah Ta'ala should be removed and attention to Allah Ta'ala should be inculcated.

Sources:

- 1. Ta'leemuddin- Hakeem ul Ummah Mujaddidul-Millah Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Saheb Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)
- 2. Faru'ul Imaan- Hazrat Hakeem ul Ummah Mujaddidul Millah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)
- 3. Behishti Zewar-Hazrat Hakeem ul Ummah Mujaddidul Millah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)
- 4. Kamalaat-e-Ashrafiyyah- Hazrat Hakeem ul Ummah Mujaddidul Millah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)

Note: Besides these books, the teachings and sayings of my elders and Mashaikh as well as my personal experiences are included.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّى عَلَى رَسُوْلِمِ الْكَرِيْم

Reformation Of Character

Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Noble character dissolves sins just as salt dissolves ice, and evil character destroys worship just as vinegar destroys honey." Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "The most beloved to me and the one closest to me in the hereafter will be the one whose character is good and the one most disliked by me and the most furthest away from me in the hereafter will be the one whose character is evil." Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) also said, "He who is deprived of softness, has been deprived of all goodness."



Noble Character

- Tawbah (Repentance)
- Sabr (Patience)
- Shukr (Gratitude)
- Khaf (Fear)
- Rajâ (Hope)
- Zuhd (Disinclination from the world)
- Hayâ (Modesty)
- Tawakkul (Trust in Allah Ta'ala)
- Mahabbah (Love of Allah Ta'ala)
- Shawq (Desire to meet Allah Ta'ala)
- Ikhlâs (Seeking the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala in one's worship) (i.e. (sincerity))
- Sidq (To worship Allah Ta'ala according to the Sunnah)
- Murâqabah¹ (Visualizing that Allah Ta'ala is watching).
- Muhâsabah (To take stock of one's good and evil actions daily)
- Tafakkur (Pondering over the creation of Allah Ta'ala)
- Ma'rifat and Azamah (Attaining the recognition and greatness of Allah Ta'ala)
- Wafaul-ahd (Fulfilling of promises)
- Tawâdhu (Humility)
- Rahmah and Shafqah (Mercy and compassion)
- Radhâ bil Qadhâ (To be pleased on Allah Ta'ala's decision
- Tawakkul (Trust in Allah Ta'ala)
- Hilm (Forbearance)
- Tafwîdh and taslîm (handing over matters to Allah Ta'ala)
- Yaqîn (conviction)

صبر و شکر و قناعت و حلم و یقین

¹ meditation

تفویض و توکل و رضا و تسلیم

All the praiseworthy qualities are included in this poem.

An advice of Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)

The reality of noble character is that we must not cause any form of difficulty and inconvenience to anyone, whether outward or inward, in his presence or in his absence. (*Kamaalaat-e-Ashrafiyyah*, *Pg.93*, *No.440*)

If by practicing on any form of taqwa (abstention from something permisible), someone's heart will be broken, then one should rather practice on the fatwa (verdict of the Ulama). At such occasions, to protect one' taqwa is not permissible. For example, if, in accepting a certain gift, there is a form of disgrace for you and honour for your brother, then give preference to his honour over yours and accept the gift. (Kamaalaat-e-Ashrafiyyah pg.93, No.442)

The Definition of Noble Character and the Method of acquiring it

Taubah (Repentance)

Meaning: Hazrat Abdullah ibn Masood (Radhiallaho Anho) said,

الندم توبة

"Taubah is when one's heart feels ashamed and sorrowful due to a sin committed, and thus becomes restless." In short, understand it in this way: When someone does wrong to a great person, then how does e go about seeking pardon? He wrings his hands, falls to the feet of that person, places his topi at his feet, utters words of flattery and adopts a crying face. Similarly, when seeking repentance before Allah Ta'ala, one should at least adopt an equivalent behavior. Such a Taubah, according to Allah's promise is definitely accepted!

Method of acquisition: To attain the ability to repent, ponder over the punishments (for evil deeds) mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith. Consequently, the heart will begin to dislike sin. Along with verbal repentance, begin making qadha of any Salaah and fasts that were missed after consulting with the Ulama the method to repay. If you have not given any person his due right or any inheritor his/her inheritance, then do so. If one does not have the ability to do so, then at least ask those people for forgiveness.

Khauf (Fear of Allah Ta'ala)

Importance: It is narrated that Hazrat Mu'aaz (Radhiallaho Anho) said, "The heart of a believer cannot be without fear and his fear can never become tranquil."

Method of acquisition: One should at all times remember that Allah Ta'ala knows all our actions and statements, and is fully aware of our outer and inner secrets. On the Day of Judgment, He will take our reckoning.

Rajâ (Hope in the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala)

Importance: Allah Ta'ala states, "Verily, the ones who are despondent of Allah Ta'ala's mercy are the disbelievers." (Surah Yusuf verse 87) This shows that having hope in His mercy is a part of Imaan.

Method of acquisition: The way to acquire this is that you should be obedient to Allah Ta'ala and worship Him; and using your courage, abstain from sins! It is natural that one places his hopes in the one to whom he is obedient. And one's heart becomes afraid and despondent of the one whom he disobeys.

Meaning: The meaning of having hopes on Him when repenting means that one should look at Allah Ta'ala's unlimited mercy and be convinced that one's Taubah will be accepted. When a small dynamite can blow up a mountain into small bits, then we can well imagine what power there must be in Allah Ta'ala's mercy, by which mountains of sins are turned to smithereens. However, to become unafraid of Allah Ta'ala, relying on His mercy, and to become accustomed to sinning, is dangerous and a major deception. Does any person place his hand in a fire, trusting on a healing lotion which is hundred percent effective?

Haya (Shame and Modesty)

Importance: Shame and Modesty are beautiful qualities.

Result: If one is shameful before the creation, he will not do any action which they dislike. Likewise, if shame before Allah Ta'ala develops, then one will abstain from those actions which his Creator dislikes.

Method of acquisition: One should stipulate some time and sit in solitude, during which he should think of his sins and compare them against Allah Ta'ala's favours. After a few days, shame will be inculcated in the heart and one will feel ashamed to disobey Allah Ta'ala. When this shame predominates, then one will not be able to sin.

Shukr (Gratitude)

Shukr is of two types:

1. Shukr to Allah Ta'ala

2. Shukr to the creation by means of which you have attained a bounty.

Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "He who is not grateful to man, has not been grateful to Allah Ta'ala." This teaches us that to be grateful and respectful to one's parents, teachers, spiritual guide and all other benefactors is one aspect of being grateful to Allah Ta'ala. A Hadith states, "If a person receives anything, then if he has the ability to give a gift in place of the one received, he should do so. If he does not have the ability, then he should praise the giver, for he who praises the giver has shown gratitude to him. If he conceals it, he has been ungrateful."

Meaning: The reality of shukr is to appreciate the bounty. When one appreciates it, then he will also appreciate the giver of the bounty. Due to this, one will be grateful to the creator and the creation (who were the means to receive that bounty).. More important than verbal shukr is practical shukr i.e. not to disobey your true Master who is continuously bestowing favours upon you, and to make a full effort to be obedient to Him. In this way, one should also fulfill the rights of one's parents, teachers and Shaikh (spiritual guide).

Benefit: The Qur'an has promised an increase in bounties for one who is thankful for them. However, the perfection of shukr is confined to carrying out good actions and abstaining from sins. Repentance and seeking forgiveness for one's shortcomings is also included in it.

Result: The crux of gratitude is to be happy with the bounties of Allah Ta'ala, thus building His love in the heart. Then, by this love, such a feeling should be developed that since He grants us so many bounties, we should worship Him in greater abundance. To disobey such a benefactor is a matter of great shame!

Method of acquisition: Think and ponder over the bounties of Allah Ta'ala. Specify a time for it daily, so that you do not miss it. This is referred to as muraqabah-e-in'aamat-e-ilahiyyah

(contemplation of Divine bounties). At every moment, thousands of Allah Ta'ala's bounties are raining upon us. If any calamity befalls one, then he should regard it as beneficial for himself and consider it to be a bounty in disguise!

Wafâul Ahd (Fulfilment of Promises)

Importance: Allah Ta'ala states, "O believers, fulfill your pacts, verily one will be questioned regarding his pacts." On the Day of Judgment, we will be asked, 'Did you fulfill your pacts and promises or not?' Not fulfilling one's pacts and promises with others is a sign of hypocrisy as mentioned in a Hadith. However, if one has promised something which is contrary to the Shariah, then it is not correct to fulfill it.

Sabr (Patience)

Virtue: A Hadith states, "Patience is half of Imaan." Allah Ta'ala states, "Verily Allah Ta'ala is with those who possess patience."

Meaning: Man has two forces within himself. One encourages him to remain on Deen, and the other encourages him to fulfill his desires. Sabr refers to letting the first force dominate over the second.

Method of acquisition: Do not practice on the demands/desires of the Nafs. The ability to have Sabr is created by zikr (remembrance of Allah Ta'ala), companionship of the friends of Allah Ta'ala and contemplating over death, the grave and Hell. In short, patience refers to binding the Nafs to Deen and not allowing it to act contrary to Deen.

Five occasions of Sabr:

1.) If one is wealthy, the sabr which he will have to display is that his mind must not become spoilt, he must not forget Allah Ta'ala, and he should bear in mind death and the loneliness of the grave. He should not despise the poor, but rather should be kind and soft

towards them.

- 2.) The second occasion of sabr is that one should not become lazy at the appointed time of fulfilling any act of worship whether it be performing Salâh or giving Zakât. At such occasions, three aspects must necessarily be kept in mind:
- * Correct your intention before the act of worship you are doing it only for Allah Ta'ala's pleasure. The Nafs should have no share in it.
- *Do not be lax whilst doing the act of worship. With courage, fulfill the act of worship in accordance with the Sunnah wholeheartedly. Try to concentrate as well.
- *After carrying out the act of worship, do not go around, telling people of your acts of worship.
- 3.) The third occasion of sabr is to suppress the Nafs when it has an urge to commit sin.
- 4.) When someone causes you harm or insults you, then sabr in that instance is not to take revenge but rather to remain quiet. Contemplate, "Today, if I forgive him; tomorrow Allah Ta'ala will forgive my sins."
- 5.) When some calamity, sickness, loss of wealth or the death of some close family member or friend afflicts one, sabr on that ccasion is not to utter any word contrary to the Shariah. One should not object to the decisions of Allah Ta'ala: Why was I oppressed, why was our relative given death so quickly, etc. Nor should one utter such statements and cry about the calamity in front of people. However, to cry and shed tears due to natural grief, as well as to expose your sorrow before your close friends with the intention of lessening your heartfelt grief is permissible. It is a fact that at times, by being patient, keeping quiet and silently bearing grief, one is afflicted with heart problems. On such occasions, think of the reward of being patient. Then think that all of this is only for my benefit. By not adopting sabr, taqdir

(predestination) will not change- why must I then lose out on even its rewards?

When one receives reward for any sorrow, then how can the sorrow still remain a sorrow?

Nothing happens without His wish and His wish does not occur without wisdom.

Due to sorrow, my eyes are shedding tears, for His pleasure my heart has completely accepted His decision."

Ikhlâs (Sincerity)

Meaning: Whatever work of Deen one does, his intention should be to attain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. He should not have any worldly aim, nor should he do it for show (hoping that people regard him to be a pious man, etc.). Likewise, if someone has pain in his stomach and has lost his appetite, for him to fast so that his stomach becomes light and feels well; or for the one feeling hot to make a fresh wudhu to attain coolness or for one to give a beggar something so that 'this pest' goes away are all contrary to possessing of a sincere intention.

Method of acquisition: When a person does any act of worship, then he should cleanse his heart of every objective besides the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Whoever does an action for show, Allah Ta'ala will on the Day of Judgment expose his faults." He has also said, "A small amount of show is a type of shirk (polytheism)."

To leave out a good action due to fear of riyâ (show) is also a form

of riyâ (show). Shaytaan prevents a person from doing good actions on the pretext of riyâ (show). He whispers to one - if you do this good action, it will be for show. Therefore, understand well that not to carry out a good action for fear of show is also show (riya). Just as performing a good action for people is riya, abandoning a good action for fear that people will know or see is also riya. Answer Shaytaan in this manner, "When our intention is not to show people, then how can it be riyâ (show)? We regard riyâ to be evil." Then, immediately involve yourself in that good action, even though some friend or relative may be nearby. Do not be concerned with the whisperings of Shaytaan. Being assailed by thoughts and whisperings of riyâ is not necessarily riyâ, as long as one does not make the intention to show. In this manner, when you immerse yourself in good actions, ignoring these thoughts and whisperings, Shaytaan will become helpless and flee.

Hazrat Hajee Imdadullah Sahib Muhaajir Makki (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "Riya (show) does not always remain riya. In the beginning, one does an action for show, but later it becomes a habit and then this habit finally changes into ibadat and Ikhlas (sincerity). Hazrat Khawajah Azizul Hasan Sahib Majzoob (Rahmatullah Alaihe) explained the same point in the following stanza:

That Riya (ostentation) which people were ridiculing was first a habit, but eventually became worship (i.e. it no longer remained riya)

In short, do not be concerned with that riya which comes involntarily, and do not abandon noble actions due to it.

Muraqabah (Visualizing that Allah Ta'ala is

watching)

Meaning: Visualize in your heart at every moment that Allah Ta'ala is fully aware of all our conditions, whether it be our outward actions or whether it be our intentions and thoughts in our hearts. If we perpetrate an evil action or transport evil thoughts in our heart, then Allah Ta'ala will perhaps punish us in this world or in the hereafter. During acts of worship, realize that Allah Ta'ala is watching one; therefore he should worship Him in a beautiful manner.

Method of acquisition: To acquire this state, daily, at a fixed time, for a short while, envision that Allah Ta'ala is watching one and seeing what lies within his heart. After a period of time, this thought will remain with one even whilst walking around. Inshallah, by the blessings of this contemplation, one will not do any action contrary to His pleasure.

The Method of attaining concentration whilst reciting Qur'an Sharif

When one intends to recite the Holy Qur'an, imagine that Allah Ta'ala is commanding you, "Recite My speech to Me, let Me see how you recite." Ponder that when you read the Qur'an in front of some high-ranking person, you attempt to recite it most beautifully. Since Allah Ta'ala is most definitely listening, you should endeavour to recite it even more beautifully. Whilst reciting, if one becomes unmindful, then renew this thought. After practicing for some time, the heart will easily begin to concentrate.

The Method of acquiring Concentration in Salaah

(1) When commencing Salaah, ponder, "I am standing before Allah Ta'ala and He is watching me. It is the Day of Judgment.

Reckoning is taking place. Jannah and Jahannum are before me." By this thought, the heart will begin to concentrate.

- (2) Another manner of attaining this is to recite every word with inent. Whichever word is about to be read, think to yourself that you are now reading this word.
- (3) A third method is to learn the translation of whatever is being recited in Salaah, and when reading any word, try to think and ponder over its meaning. In this way, a servant will know what he is saying to His Master and Creator. He will attain great enjoyment.
- (4) When he prostrates, he should think that his head is at the feet of Allah Ta'ala as is stated in a Hadith, "When a believer prostrates, then his head is at the feet of Rahman (The Most Merciful)." Subhanallah! How blessed is that head which is lying at the feet of His True Master. Ask His lovers of its enjoyment! Hazrat Shah Fadhlur Rahman Sahib Ganj Muradabadi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said to Hazrat Moulana Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe), "Mia (My dear) Ashraf Ali, when I place my head in prostration, then it feels as Allah Ta'ala is showing love to me and He has taken me into His extreme proximity. In prostration, the friends of Allah Ta'ala are granted a special closeness and proximity."

Someone has beautifully stated,

پردے اٹھے ہوئے بھی ہیں ان کی ادھر نظر بھی ہے بڑھ کے مقدر آزما سر بھی ہے سنگِ در بھی ہے The veils are also lifted; His gaze is also in this direction Venture forward and acquire good fortunate, for the head as well as the threshold (of Allah Ta'ala) are both nearby.

(5) One other way of gaining concentration in Salaah is to keep in mind which posture one is in. For example, in standing posture,

one should think that one is in the standing posture, in *Ruku*, one should think that he is in *Ruku*; and in *Sajdah*, he should think that he is in *Sajdah*.

The Methods of Attaining Allah Ta'ala's Love

(1) A very easy method of attaining Allah Ta'ala's love- If a person daily visits another for a short while, then within a few days, love is formed. The result of meeting daily for some period is that if, perchance, they do not meet each other for a while, both of them will become restless to meet the other, and will wait for each other. There is no need to present any proofs for this visible reality. In like manner, begin meeting Allah Ta'ala daily for a short while. The manner of meeting Allah Ta'ala is that one should take a Tasbih, and, facing the Qiblah in solitude, one should make the Zikr of Allah Ta'ala for a short while. Kalimah Tauheed, Durood Sharif, recitation of Qur'an, uttering "Allah, Allah", are all included in Zikr. This Zikr is actually a meeting with Allah Ta'ala. It is narrated in a Hadith Qudsi¹,

"I am the companion of the one who remembers Me."

In other words, Allah Ta'ala is saying "I am close to Him." It is so easy for a servant to meet Allah Ta'ala whenever he pleases. Begin Zikr and one meets Him.

Whilst walking, if one calls out or recites softly,

then Allah Ta'ala will make manifest upon this servant the blessings and goodness of these names. When he says, يَا حَلِيْه, then it is as though he has sought the quality of tolerance to be

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^{1.} Such a Hadith which is uttered by Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam), but he attributes the saying to Allah Ta'ala.

manifested on him. Hilm (tolerance) means not to take revenge in spite of having the ability to do so. The result of this will be that the All-Powerful Being will not punish this sinful servant in spite of having the ability to do so. When one says يَا كُرِيْم though he has called upon the quality of Karam (kindness). Thus, Allah Ta'ala along with withholding His punishment, through His kindness, will also bestow favours upon His servant. When one says يَا وَاسِعَ الْمَغْفِرَة , then Allah Ta'ala on account of His unlimited and vast quality of forgiveness will forgive the limited sins of this sinful servant. If one accustoms himself to reading these words whilst walking, sitting and lying down, then there is hope of receiving many favors of Divine closeness, and by its blessings, this person will become forebearant, generous and forgiver of others faults. Therefore, recital of these words in abundance is an elixir and alchemy for spiritual ailments such as being overpowered by anger, being overtaken by the desire to take revenge, stinginess and not overlooking and forgiving the errors of people. If a person with evil character recites these words with sincerity and with the intention of reformation, then, Inshallah, he will become a person of good character.

(2) The second method of attaining Allah Ta'ala's love is to contemplate over His bounties. He has created the heavens, the earth, the oceans, the mountains, the trees, the animals and the birds, actually He has created the entire universe for our benefit and nurturing and we have been created solely for His worship. Think of every single bounty separately and be grateful. It is a matter of common-sense that one develops a mutual form of live for his (Sidq) .Logically, natural love is created for one's benefactor.

(3) The third method which is the soul of the other two methods and which is extremely beneficial is that one should at times go in the company of Allah Ta'ala's lovers and should listen to their talks with love and conviction. A Hadith states that the hearts of the friends of Allâh Ta'ala are the mines of taqwa. Just as one attains gold from a gold mine, silver from a silver mine, salt from a salt mine, the treasures of taqwa and the love of Allah Ta'ala will be attained from the companionship of His close friends (which is the mine containing the treasures).

For example, if a donkey falls and dies in a salt mine, it too will become salt. In like manner, if you annihilate your opinion in the presence of your Shaikh; casting aside your rank and status, and you stay with him for some time, then Insha-Allah you also will become Allah Ta'ala's friend. Maulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has stated, "If you are a stone, then do not lose hope. By going to those whose hearts are connected to Allah Ta'ala, you will become a pearl."

These three methods of attaining Allah Ta'ala's love are the advices of Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) which this weak one has quoted with some explanation. May Allah Ta'ala grant this weak one and all our honourable readers the treasure of His love. Ameen

Which Servant does Allah Ta'ala Love?

Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Rifa'i Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "Whichever servant Allah Ta'ala loves:"

- **1.** He shows him his faults.
- 2. He creates within him love and compassion for all creation.
- **3.** He makes him accustomed to spending generously.

- 4. He grants him a special enthusiasm to host people. This is such an act of worship which Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) used to do even before Nabuwwat.
- 5. He creates within him great courage and loftyaspirations, as well as the ability to overlook the wrongs of others. He grants him such keen awareness of his own faults that he regards himself as the lowest, most humble and most unworthy compared to all others.
- 6. By this path of humility and meekness, he becomes the beloved of Allah Ta'ala, since there is no shortage of greatness in His treasury. However, humility is not found in His treasures, as this is a quality of a slave, from which Allah Ta'ala is pure. Allah Ta'ala therefore loves this quality in His servants.
- 7. Allah Ta'ala removes from his heart the desire to be considered great by the creation and the desire to consider himself superior to others.
- 8. He will be respectful before Allah Ta'ala, which will manifest itself in being respectful to Allah Ta'ala's creation.

The creation of Allah Ta'ala are the thresholds and the doors of the Divine court. If you come to know the reality of respecting the creation of Allah Ta'ala, then Allah Ta'ala's doors of acceptance will also open for you. If you continuously fight with the creation, then you will become entangled with them and you will remain deprived of Allah Ta'ala's closeness. Respecting the creation here refers to winning over the hearts of people. Make them happy. Therefore, those personalities whom Allah Ta'ala has granted His special closeness and a true feeling of His recognition are always engaged in attempting to unite hearts. They have laid down themselves on the walkways of people. Due to this humility and

annihilation, their souls have begun to fly with spiritual wings in the courts of acceptance! Through the means of the creation, they have recognized Allah Ta'ala. A Hadith Qudsi states, "I am with those people whose hearts have shattered due to My Grandeur, Greatness and Majesty and who have chosen humility for My pleasure." This Hadith clearly shows that one should be humble and submissive in front of people. However, the object should not be any worldly aim, but rather only for Allah Ta'ala's sake. However, to annihilate one's Nafs to this level is not easy; Otherwise, every person in the world would have become a friend of Allah Ta'ala. This bounty will be attained by the companionship of some pious person, who is an intense lover of Allah Ta'ala. However, it does not come by at no cost. One has to strive and make an effort.

I did not receive it just like that, my heart and liver became blood in the process (i.e. I worked hard for it), Why should I give it to anyone free, my efforts were not for free.

If this bounty was acquired free of charge, there will be no appreciation. As Maulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has said,

لیک شیرینی و لذاتِ مقر بست بر اندازهٔ رنج سفر The more difficult one's journey is, the more comfort and enjoyment is felt by one when he reaches his destination.

Respect for One's Elders

Benefit: Respect for one's parents, teachers, elders; compassion for one's juniors and respect for Ulama is a sign of good fortune. What is the definition of good fortune? It is the ability to do good which is granted by Allah Ta'ala. Our pious elders have stated,

با ادب بانصیب ہے ادب ہے نصیب

One who is respectful will be fortunate, one who possesses no respect will be unfortunate.

Harms of disrespect: A person who is disrespectful to his elders is actually inviting his juniors to be disrespectful to him. Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Stay chaste from other women, your women will remain chaste. Be good to your parents, your children will be good to you. If anyone asks you for forgiveness then forgive him. Whoever does not forgive will be deprived of drinking from the pond of Kauther on the plains of Resurrection." More especially, to say even 'ofh' (or any other word which may hurt their feelings or anger them) to your parents is Haraam (prohibited). If any disobedient child's parents have passed away, then he should send rewards (isâluth thawâb) to them in great abundance. There is hope that such a person will be resurrected amongst the obedient children.

Compassionate to the Young

Benefit: To have mercy and compassion upon one's wife, children and the weak is a sign of a soft heart and good fortune. Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) has said, "The best amongst you with regards to character is one who portrays good character to his family members."

How can the character of such a person be noble who keeps his friends and acquaintances happy, but on returning home makes life difficult for all, and loses his temper on trivial matters, causing his wife and children to cry. Allah Ta'ala has revealed the command in the Qur'an to treat one's wife with good character and to live amicably with her.

وَ عَاشِرُوْ هُنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْف Treat them with kindness Here I will narrate two incidents, which are sufficient as advice.

INCIDENT 1: One person used to chide his wife for every minor matter. Day and night, he used to amuse himself with his friends. His wife used to wait the whole day for him all alone. Some husbands are so oppressive. They neglect those very wives, who had to leave their parents and their whole family just to come and live with their husbands, while they go and spend their time amusing themselves with others. Thereafter, they return home late at night, eat and sleep away. Who will bring joy to this woman, who, due to the command of the Shari'at, is a prisoner in her husband's home? Once, it so happened that the husband had a bout of diarrhea. He continuously vomited and passed stools. Eventually, he was unable to get off the bed, urinating and passing stools there. During this time, it was this same wife who would clean the stools and wash him. No other friend or relative in the world came to assist him. According to the Shari'at also, besides the wife, no other person can clean the private parts. Only the wife can fulfill this duty. A mother does this during one's infancy but after becoming of age, it is not even permissible for her to do this service. This shows us that the wife is such a bounty whose assistance one needs in such difficult times. When the husband recovered, he called for his wife, cried and said, "Forgive me, I have really not appreciated you. Allah Ta'ala opened my eyes through this sickness. I was blind, now I can see. From today, I promise to appreciate you."

INCIDENT 2: One person had a don't-care with regards to his wife and would keep a very rigid relationship with her. He had no relationship of love and feelings for her. On her small errors, he would hit her and speak harshly to her. His temperament was melancholic. May Allah Ta'ala protect us from having such a harsh nature. To be a loving person is a great fortune and a great bounty of Allah Ta'ala. When this person's daughter got married and her husband began beating her, he rushed off to get a ta'weez and

began crying, "Ah! Such oppression is being meted out upon my beloved daughter. He does not feel the pain and hurt she is undergoing. Oh, what my daughter is going through?" The scholar who he had approached was his old friend. He said to him, "Remember the time when you used to beat your wife, leave her alone at night and go away; when you used to sit with your friends instead of bringing joy to her heart by speaking to her and being part of her pains and sorrows. Now, without becoming angry, tell me clearly, was that poor one (i.e. your wife) not someone's daughter and someone's beloved? Ah! If only you could have realized it at that time! Now you seem to easily understand it!" On hearing this, he began crying and said, "Really, I have really oppressed my wife." Thereafter, he proceeded straight to his house and asked his wife for forgiveness. For the remainder of his life, he loved her with great compassion, love and feelings. He began regarding every sorrow of his wife's as his own and he was granted the ability to observe the etiquettes of good companionship and to fulfill her rights.

Tasleem, Radha, Tafweedh and Dua'a

Meaning: Those matters, in the world, which do not occur in accordance to one's likes and desires, at times causes extreme grief, sorrow and ultimately ill-health. As a result, weakness and laxity is found in one's religious matters as well. For this reason, Allah Ta'ala has commanded us to be content with what has been preordained.

Method of acquisition: Think that even though this is contrary to my will, not even a leaf moves without Allah Ta'ala's will. Therefore, this matter has occurred by His will, and our Master's will is superior to our will. There is without doubt only our benefit in this, because Allah Ta'ala's special Mercy is ninety-nine times greater than even that of one's parents.

Hazrat Bahlul (Rahmatullah Alaihe) was a pious man. Someone asked him, "How are you?" He replied, "What can you

ask of the condition of one by whose will the entire universe is running?" The person asked, "How can this be?" He answered, "In the world, all matters take place according to Allah Ta'ala's will. I have annihilated my desire in front of His desire. Thus, whatever is the desire of my Master is my desire. Therefore, everything is taking place according to my desire. For this reason, I am happy in every condition."

Benefits: 1.) By implementing this teaching of Allah Ta'ala, a servant will remain happy in all conditions i.e. some sorrow and grief will be felt, but it will not be unbearable. 2.) This small amount of grief will increase the enjoyment a servant will perceive when he will make Dua'a to Allah Ta'ala. 3.) It will also be a means of attaining Allah Ta'ala's special closeness. 4.) One will not be unmindful of the Hereafter. 5.) Finally, one will be saved from the love of this world.

This is such a lesson by which the pious servants of Allah Ta'ala pass their days and nights in great comfort. A worldly person loses his senses and begins melting on trivial matters, whereas the friends of Allah Ta'ala place mountains of sorrow, on the catapult of tasleem and radha and send them flying, making them seem similar to the wing of a mosquito!

Reality: The reality of *radha bil qadha* is to continue asking Allah Ta'ala for goodness and to be pleased with the decision that He passes. It is the misfortune of a servant that he stops asking for goodness, and he becomes displeased with Allah Ta'ala's decision. Being pleased with Allah Ta'ala's decision does not mean that in unfavorable circumstances, no sorrow and sadness passes over one's heart. When an operation is done on a patient who has some sores, then, despite pain, he is happy with the doctor. What must have been the condition of Hazrat Ya'qoub (Alaihis Salaam) who, in grief of his son Hazrat Yusuf (Alaihis Salaam), cried intensely? However, in his heart, he was pleased with the decision of Allah Ta'ala and he used to present his sorrows before Him

only. Hazrat Khawajah Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) explains the enjoyment of this tasleem (submission) in the following words,

Who has joined me in the gathering of sorrow and grief? The gathering of sorrow and grief has suddenly become the gathering of joy and happiness

However, this bounty of being pleased with Allah Ta'ala's decision will only be attained when one has love for Allah Ta'ala and conviction in the Hereafter. This conviction and love of Allah Ta'ala will be attained by Zikrullah (remembrance Allah Ta'ala), worship and the company of Allah Ta'ala's accepted servants.

When Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam)'s son passed away, he remarked, "O Ibrahim, verily the eyes are tearing and the heart is sorrowful, but we will only say that with the tongue which is pleasing to our Master. Definitely we are saddened by your separation." When one Sahabi, out of astonishment once asked, "Do you also cry?" Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "O Ibn Auf, this is a mercy (this crying is due to mercy).

When Hazrat Moulana Qasim Nanotwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) passed away, Hazrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) was grief-stricken. He said, "If I did not have something, I would have become bedridden due to grief." People asked what that treasure was. He replied, "A connection with Allah Ta'ala." May Allah Ta'ala grant it to all of us. Ameen

Combining Tafweedh and Dua'a

Some pious elders of the past, due to being overtaken by some condition, abandoned even making dua and regarded it to be contrary to *tasleem* and *tafweedh*. However, Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "A person who is overtaken by conditions is excused. He should not be imitated.

One who has control over himself and is a muhaqqiq (expert in the field) should be imitated and followed." Then he said, "Together with tasleem and tafweedh, to make Dua'a is the actual Sunnah. They should be combined in this manner that one should continue asking Allah Ta'ala for well-being, while in the heart one must have the intention that if my Dua'a is not accepted, then too I will be pleased with Allah Ta'ala's decree. My Murshid, Hazrat Maulana Shah Abrarul Haq Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "A believer is successful in all conditions i.e. he continues pleasing Allah Ta'ala in favorable conditions with gratitude and in unfavorable conditions with patience. Hazrat Maulana Shah Muhammad Ahmad Saheb Partabghari (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has so beautifully stated,

ہے کیفی میں بھی ہم نے اِک کیفِ مسلسل دیکھا ہے جس حال میں بھی وہ رکھتے ہیں اس حال کو اکمل دیکھا ہے ہے جس راہ کو اثقل دیکھا ہے ہیں راہ کو اثقل دیکھا ہے جس راہ سے وہ لے چلتے ہیں اس راہ کو اسہل دیکھا ہے

We saw a continuous joy even in a state of joylessness. In whichever condition He keeps us, we consider that condition to be the most perfect.

We found that the path which we choose for ourselves to be the most difficult path.

But we found that the path which He leads us on to be the easiest.

Tawakkul (Reliance on Allah Ta'ala)

Allah Ta'ala states, "Only upon Allah should the believers rely." Hazrat Ibn Abbas (Radhiallaho Anhuma) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "From my Ummah, seventy

thousand people will enter paradise without any reckoning. These are the people who do not use amulets, do not believe in bad omens and have trust on their Sustainer." Some narrations state, "And they do not take medication." Thus, to use medication and not to use medication are both Sunnah. There is ease in this ruling for every type of person (weak and strong). The meaning of the above is that they do not recite impermissible amulets. Some have stated, "It is best not to use tawiz (amulets) at all." Taking of evil omens means that, for example, someone's sneezing or an animal coming in front of someone, is regarded it to be bad luck and one falls into unnecessary doubts. However, taking good omens are permissible.

Incorrect notion regarding Tawakkul¹

Today, some people have regarded the meaning of Tawakkul to abandon all means and effort and to sit idly. This meaning is completely incorrect. The Tawakkul taught to us by the Shari'at is that one should make use of means and avenues, regarding it as a begging cup, and at the same time to believe that only Allah Ta'ala is the Giver. The success of the means is based on Allah Ta'ala's grace. Do those who regard Tawakkul to refer to abandonment of means not open their mouths to eat, chew their food and eventually swallow it. This is the means and avenue for food reaching the stomach. This proves that the manner they have understood tawakkul is not correct. Similarly, for a person to be naturally uneasy when one's sustenance is delayed in not contrary to Tawakkul. Despite having trust in Allah Ta'ala's promise of providing sustenance, if one is naturally uneasy then this is natural, because the time and amount is not specified, thus one does not know when and how much he will receive. In fact, the benefit of this is that he will be granted the ability to make excessive dua. Logically, his reliance will remain on Allah Ta'ala.

¹ Reliance on Allah Ta'ala





- Ujub (vanity)
- Takabbur (pride)
- Namimah (Carrying tales)
- Hiqd (Malice)
- Hasad (Jealousy)
- Ghadhab (Anger)
- To desire evil for someone
- Su'uz Zann (To think evil of someone)
- Hubbud Dunya (Love of the world)
- Lahwul Hadith (Habit of useless and impermissible speech)
- Ghibah (Backbiting)
- Kizb (Lies)
- Bukhl (Stinginess)
- Riya (Show and ostentation) (extracted from Talimud-din and Furu-ul Imaan)
- Shahwah (Lust)
- Evil glancing
- Ishq Majazi (Figurative love)

(Last three are additions by the author)

Hazrat Moulana Ahraf Ali Thanwi (rahimahullah) mentioned, "To have no intention of harming others is not sufficient. It is necessary to make an intention that one will not harm another."

In the following poem, all the evil traits have been combined:

The Cure for the Disease of Considering Oneself to be Great i.e. Pride

Harms: This illness is very dangerous. It was this same disease which caused Shaytaan to become rejected. Therefore, he uses this very prescription, which he had tried on himself, on human beings with great ease, and finds it to be hundred percent successful in leading them astray. This sickness causes a son to quarrel and argue with his father; a student with his teacher; a Mureed with his Shaikh; and a slave with Allah Ta'ala. The first rejected one in the Divine Court, Shaytaan, was destroyed because of this sickness. For this reason, the pious elders have devised many precautionary measures and methods to save their friends and helpers from this disease. Due to this disease, a person regards himself to be greater and more superior than others in knowledge, worship, piety, wealth, honour, intellect or any other matter, and he regards others as lowly and despicable. Such a person is despised by others in the world, even though they may praise him whilst in front of him, due to fear or greed. Such a person does not accept anyone's advice and in fact argues with those who advise

him. He does not accept the truth when he is advised. The reality of pride has been referred to in the Hadith as,

بَطَرُ الْحَقّ To reject the truth غَمْطُ النّاس

To despise others - to consider others inferior to oneself

Harms: Whoever finds these two signs within himself should immediately seek a cure for this illness, or else there is a fear that all one's good deeds may be reduced to dust. A Hadith states, "In whomsoever's heart lies pride equal to a mustard seed, he will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise, never mind entering Jannah itself." Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Whoever humbles and lowers himself for Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will grant him honor and status amongst people, even though he regards himself as lowly. He who lives with pride, then Allah Ta'ala will disgrace him until he will be regarded as more despised than a dog and pig in the eyes of people, even though he regards himself as very great in his heart. Hazrat Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has narrated this Hadith in his book "Khutubatul Ahkam."

Ujub: If one does not look down upon anyone but only regards himself as good, he regards his excellences and good conditions to be his own perfection and does not regard it as a gift of Allah Ta'ala, and he does not have fear of losing or changing of any bounty whether it be knowledge, piety, steadfastness, spiritual exercises, worship, beauty, wealth, honor or good character, then this is referred to as Ujub (vanity). In Shari'at, both are prohibited. I will quote one saying of Hazrat Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) from "Kamalaat-e-Ashrafiyyah" here, "When a servant becomes

lowly and despised in his own eyesight, then he is noble in the sight of Allah Ta'ala, and when he regards himself to be noble, then he is evil in the sight of Allah Ta'ala."

The Cure of Pride and Vanity:

(a.) The cure for pride is to keep in mind Allah Ta'ala's greatness and to always ponder over one's final result, i.e. "I do not know how my death will occur." It is always possible that Allah Ta'ala may dislike some action of ours, due to which He renders our actions null and void. Moreover, it is possible that the person we had despised has performed one such action in his whole life which Allah Ta'ala liked, whereby all his sins will be forgiven.

Our pious elders have mentioned an incident of lesson, which will greatly assist one in the cure of this sickness. Girls of a certain locality beautified one girl (who was to be married). When she apppeared very beautiful adorned in her jewellery and smart clothing, her friends complimented her, "Sister, you look gorgeous. When you will go to your husband, he will really appreciate you." This girl began crying and said, "O my friends and sisters, I am not overjoyed with your compliments and praises. When my husband sees me, expresses his happiness with me and compliments me, then I will be absolutely overjoyed." On hearing this incident, some pious people sobbed and fell down unconscious, absorbed in the that people praise us in the world, but we have no convincing knowledge of what decision Allah Ta'ala will pass regarding us on the Day of Judgment when He sees us. Thus, to regard oneself as good and pious in this world is an act of foolishness. We should take lesson from this girl's intelligence. Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (Rahmatullah Alaihe) used to say, "When our death occurs on Imaan, then definitely we will be able to celebrate over all the actions we had

done in our life. To celebrate before that and to regard oneself as elevated due to people's praise is foolishness!"

(b.) The cure for Ujub (vanity) is that one should regard every excellence and bounty to be a gift from Allah Ta'ala. Furthermore, one should continuously fear that it can be snatched away due to some evil action. One should always fear Allah Ta'ala's independence and His quality of being Self-sufficient. The buzurgs have stated,

Continue performing good deeds and at the same time continue to fear (whether they are accepted or not).

This lesson is learnt from the Hadith wherein it is mentioned that Hazrat Aisha (Radhiallaho Anha) asked Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) the meaning of the verse وَجُلْتُ قُلُونِكُمُ (their hearts are trembling with fear). "Are they the ones who drink and steal?" Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "No, O daughter of Siddeeq, they are the ones who fast, perform Salaah and give charity. Despite all of this, they fear that perhaps these actions are not accepted. These are the ones who hasten to good actions." (Mishkaat)

This Hadith teaches us that our heads should not become bloated after performing some good deed. One should continue fearing and should make dua that these deeds of ours are accepted. One should have fear that perhaps it has not been accepted, as well as the hope that it has been accepted. One should not have so much fear of it not being accepted that he altogether abandons doing

good deeds. For this reason, Allah Ta'ala mentions at the end of this verse, "These are the ones who hasten to do good actions." The general people only seek forgiveness from sins. The special servants of Allah Ta'ala also seek forgiveness after doing good actions. Their attitude is, "How can we ever fulfill the rights of Allah Ta'ala's Greatness and Exaltedness?" Therefore, Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) used to seek forgiveness from Allah Ta'ala thrice after every Fardh Salaah. The wisdom underlying this according to the pious is that the right of Allah Ta'ala's greatness cannot be fulfilled by anyone. For this reason, the Aarifeen (those who have recognized Allah Ta'ala) seek forgiveness even after performing righteous actions.

Note: A person asked Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam), "A person likes that his clothing and shoes be good looking. Is this all pride?" Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Allah Ta'ala is beautiful and He loves beauty. Pride is to reject the truth and to despise people." From this Hadith, we learn that one should not have evil thoughts regarding those pious people who wear beautiful clothing thinking that he is proud. Being pious does not mean living at the foot of a mountain, building a shack, eating dry bread and wearing torn clothing. If such a person has love of the world in his heart, then he is a dunyadaar – person hankering after this world. If there is no love of the world in his heart, then together with possessing kingdom, Allah's servant can also be a Wali.

اگر مال و جاه ست وزرع وتجارت چو دل باخدا ایست خلوت نشینی

If together with wealth, honour, farming and business, one's heart is connected to Allah Ta'ala at all times, then this person is a friend of Allah and a person in true solitude.

This poem has been mentioned in Mazahir-e-Haqq, the commentary of Mishkaat Sharif. If a person sits at the foot of a hill or in the jungle and he waits for some prey to come, bringing for him some gifts or sweetmeats, then this person is a fraud and a person hankering after the world. In short, abstinence and Allah Ta'ala's friendship is possible to be attained together with having good food, beautiful clothing and a spacious house. This will occur by staying in the companionship of some pious person on condition that one follows the Sunnah and is steadfast on complete taqwa (abstinence of sins)!

An Objection Concerning Ujub and its answer

At this juncture, one objection that crops up is that if Allah Ta'ala grants someone an excellence, but he does not regard it as an excellence, then is this not ingratitude? The answer is that one should regard it to be a quality of perfection, but should not regard it to be his *own* excellence; he should regard it to be a divine gift from Allah Ta'ala and be grateful. Instead of being proud, he should always fear that this special bounty is not snatched away from him due to his evil actions.

Destruction of the Salikeen¹

Phose who are treading the path towards Allah Ta'al

¹ Those who are treading the path towards Allah Ta'ala and are in search of Him.

Shaytaan destroys the *salikeen* very quickly by placing objections against one's Shaikh in the heart.

The Cure for Pride

From the teachings of Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe)

- **1.** Ponder that the excellences found within myself are not created by myself but rather are a gift of Allah Ta'ala.
- **2.** This gift was neither due to my being worthy of it, nor due to my capabilities. It has been granted to me solely by His grace and kindness.
- **3.** The preservation of this bounty is also not within my control. When Allah Ta'ala wants, He can snatch it away.
- **4.** Even though the one whom I regard as low does not possess this excellence at the present, Allah Ta'ala has the power to snatch away this excellence from me and grant it to him. Or alternatively, without snatching it from me, Allah Ta'ala can grant him a higher level of that excellence and can grant him such a lofty status that I will become dependent on him.
- **5.** Even, if, in the future, he does not attain this excellence, it is quite possible that at the present moment he has within himself such an excellence which is concealed from me and everyone else, which only Allah Ta'ala is aware of. Due to that excellence, he is more beloved and accepted in Allah Ta'ala's sight than me.
- 6. If the possibility of any excellence does not come to mind then think that it is possible that he is more accepted in the sight of Allah Ta'ala than me and in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala, my acceptance is of a far lesser degree or I may not be accepted at all. On the Day of Judgment, how many people who used to walk by foot in this world will be on conveyances and how

- many people who were on conveyances here will have to walk. Therefore, what right do I have to regard him as inferior, when I am not aware of my own result?
- 7. Deal kindly and behave benevolently with the person whom you regard as contemptible or low. Make a lot of dua for him. Consequently, love for him will be created, and the natural characteristic of love is that whoever one loves, he does not regard him with contempt. For this purpose, make it a point to ask that person how he is feeling and speak to him. In this manner, a relationship will be established from both sides and the essence of contempt will vanish. (Kamaalaat-e-Ashrafiyyah page 94)

The Difference between Riya, Ujub and Takabbur

Riya (show and ostentation) is always found in acts of worship and religious matters. Ujub (vanity) and Takabbur (pride) is found in religious and worldly matters. Pride is when a person regards another to be low and contemptible, whilst in Ujub, one regards himself to be good, even though he does not look down on anyone. When Takabbur is found, then Ujub will always be found with it, but when Ujub is found, Takabbur is not necessarily found.

Note: Remember that if there is any person for whom it is Wajib (compulsory) to hate according to the Shari'at, then do not mingle with him and show him love. However, do not despise him, due to fear regarding your own end. It is possible that he will repent sometime in the future before death and go into Paradise. Moulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has said,

ہیچ کافر را بخواری منگرید کہ مسلماں بودنش باشد امید Do not even look at any disbeliever with contempt because it is possible that before dying, he can become Muslim.

However, one should have hatred for him in one's heart. Hating someone while not despising him or holding him in contempt in the heart can be combined. As an example, if a handsome prince has rubbed ink on his face, thus blackening it, one will have hatred for the blackness on his face, yet will not regard the prince with contempt, since it is possible that he will wash his face with soap and again become pure and clean. Subhanallah! Hazrat Hakeemul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) had solved such intricate matters with examples. In short, he has said, "Hate the sin, not the sinner." The reality of this is just like every person who is frightened of sickness, but regards mercy and compassion to the patient as necessary.

The Difference between Takabbur and Shyness

Shyness is a natural disinclination, which is felt by the Nafs when doing any action contrary to habit or when a perculiar spiritual condition overcomes one. Due to extreme precaution, the Salik at times thinks it to be pride, whereas in reality it is not pride. The yard stick to determine it is as follows: if any person greatly honors or respects him when one feels ashamed of doing a lowly action, then does one still feel hesitation or not? If he does, then this is shyness, and if not, then it is pride. Be wary of the fanciful interpretations of your Nafs. Make sure that he does not mix pride into your natural shyness. For a detailed cure, ask your Shaikh.

Pride in the form of Humility

Hazrat Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "At times, pride apppears in the form of humility." This means that, at times, humility is shown so that people regard one as great. The sign of this is that after being humble, if people do not honor and respect one, he feels bad. A true friend of Allah Ta'ala does not regard himself to be worthy of being respected and honoured.

The disease of Jealousy and its Cure

Meaning: Jealousy is when one feels displeased regarding the favorable conditions or some bounty of another person, and he desires that bounty be snatched away.

Harms: This disease is extremely dangerous; by it, tranquility is snatched away from one and the heart continually burns. A Hadith states, "Jealousy consumes the good actions of the jealous person just as fire consumes wood." Hazrat Maulana Shah Muhammad Ahmad Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has composed the following two beautiful poems on jealousy,

Why are you burning in the flame of jealousy? Why are you rubbing your hands in sorrow? Why are you upset with Allah's decision? Why are you advancing towards Jahannum?

Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has said, "If one becomes pleased in his heart on the loss of a bounty of another, even though outwardly he shows sorrow; then, although inner happiness is not a sin due to being non-volitional, it is still a sign of imperfection. One should cure this forcefully by making lots of dua for that person. By doing this in abundance, Inshallah this imperfection will be removed.¹

The Cure for Jealousy

If one is jealous of someone, then he should do the following:

- **1.** Always make salaam first.
- **2.** Meet him before going on a journey

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¹ Kamaalaat-e-Ashrafiyya, advice no.450

- **3.** Upon returning from a journey, bring him some gift, even though it may be cheap in value.
- **4.** Praise him in you gatherings.
- **5.** Occasionally invite him for a meal.
- 6. Make abundant dua'a for him.
- 7. If anyone speaks ill of him, stop them strictly. Tell them that it is Haraam (prohibited) to backbite as well as to listen to it.

By practicing on these guidelines for a few days Inshallah, this disease will be cured. Instead of burning within yourself due to jealousy, you will attain love for him and your heart will become light in weight like a rose-petal. It will be free for Allah Ta'ala's remembrance and worship and full of tranquility.

Malice and its Cure

Meaning: If some Muslim is harmed and he does not have the ability to avenge it, then a slight amount of anger remains within the heart. By controlling one's anger, a burden is felt on the heart. One purposely desires evil for the other person. This is referred to as *malice*.

Cure: The cure is to forgive him and to force oneself to mingle with him. Besides this, the cure is the same as has been mentioned above regarding jealousy.

The Cure for Greed and Love for the World

- 1.) The best cure for it is to attend the gatherings of the friends of Allah Ta'ala and to learn from them the manner of building up a relationship with Allah Ta'ala. As one's connection with Allah Ta'ala becomes stronger, the heart will automatically become disinclined from the world. Only remembrance of Allah Ta'ala and the company of the friends of Allah can remove this disease.
- 2.) Thinking abundantly of the world's instability and death is also very beneficial. Reciting these poems in abundance will also purify the heart of the love of the world:

دبا کے قبر میں سب چل دیے دعا نہ سلام ذرا سی دیر میں کیا ہو گیا زمانے کو

After burying me in the grave, they all have left
Without dua'a, without salaam
What has happened to people in such a short while?

Inform the nightingale that this garden will one day become desert So that it may ponder before sacrificing its life (for the garden)

Death came and rendered the conscious unconscious It simply silenced the activities of life

Occasionally, visit the graveyard and witness with your own eyes the end result and condition of the worldly people- where are their palatial homes, their vehicles, their wealth and their servants?

Now only their good deeds can assist them.

Thanks to you who are carrying my body to the grave, thanks Now, I will be going all alone from this stage onwards

Just as one prisoner cannot free another prisoner-the one who frees must be free himself-similarly one worldly person cannot free another worldly person from the love and fetters of this world. For this, the company of the friends of Allah Ta'ala is necessary, who outwardly live in the world, but they have

transcended the world as far as their souls are concerned. The following is a poem of mine:

Ta'ala

Being with all, the people of the world still remained isolated from all.

Inappropriate Anger and its Cure

Harms: When angry, one does not think properly, and he is unable to think of the consequences (of his actions). For this reason, unbefitting words escape from his mouth and oppression and excesses are committed by his hands. At times, in a rage of anger, a person utters three divorces and is then forced to regret for the rest of his life. Sometimes, in a fit of anger, a person attacks wildly without thinking, killing the other person and thus destroys homes and families for generations to come! A Hadith states, "Anger is from Shaytaan, and Shaytaan has been created from fire. The cure for fire is water. Thus, when one becomes angry, make wudhu." The cure for anger is that one should move away from the one who has angered him. If that person does not move away, then one should himself move away. Think that even though this person has wronged me, usurped my rights or disobeyed me, day and night we continue disobeying Allah Ta'ala so much more and are negligent in fulfilling His rights. Despite this, Allah Ta'ala does not snatch away His bounties and favors from us. Just as we desire that Allah Ta'ala should forgive our sins, similarly we should desire to forgive the sins of Allah Ta'ala's servants. We should forgive the sins of Allah Ta'ala's servants and do good to them in accordance to the amount we desire to be forgiven on the Day of Judgment. Insha-Allah, by thinking of this, the condition of one's heart will begin to ease. Recite,

اعوذ باالله من الشيطان الرجيم

a few times, make wudhu and drink cold water. If you are standing, then sit down. If you are sitting, then lie down. Think of Allah Ta'ala's anger. When your anger lessens, and your mind becomes sound, then select an appropriate punishment. An example of this is that when you become angry for the sake of reforming and correcting your child, then, when your anger subsides and after careful consideration, punish only as much as is allowed in the Shari'at. By repeatedly doing the above, one's anger will be reformed and controlled.

Incidents of Great Lesson with regards to not Controlling one's Anger

Controlling one's anger seems to be a burden on one's Nafs, but its result is always favorable. Even an enemy finally becomes a friend. On the other hand, by venting one's anger, even a friend finally becomes an enemy. Gradually, a person due to this evil habit loses all helpers. One person was extremely bed-tempered and used to vex his neighbors. When his wife passed away, he was forced to hire workers to carry her bier (since nobody was willing to help him). Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "A strong man is not he who defeats others in wrestling. A strong one is he who controls himself at the time of anger." Allah Ta'ala has praised those who swallow their anger, those who forgive the wrong-doings of people and those who do good to them. If in the process, one loses wealth, one should remember that whatever occurred, had occurred by the command of Allah Ta'ala and by bearing the loss patiently, one will receive reward. By reciting, إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ ۗ

on such occasions, one has been promised a better bounty. Think that by exacting revenge, one's reward will be lost, and one will attain no benefit at all. In anger, if one takes revenge and he happens to oppress the other party by exceeding the bounds, then he will have to separately bear Allah Ta'ala's punishment and will be then taken to task.

INCIDENT ONE

A pious person, Hazrat Bayazid Bustami (Rahmatullah Alaihe) was walking along when an enemy of his threw a basket of ashes on top of his head. He said, "Alhamdulillah (All praise is due only to Allah)." His disciples asked, "Was this the occasion to recite Alhamdulillah?" He replied, "Why should the one who was worthy of being burnt by fire due to his disobedience, not be grateful that only ashes fell onto him?"

INCIDENT TWO

Two men were fighting in front of Hazrat Maulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe). One said, "If you swear me once, I will swear you ten times." Hazrat said, "Swear me one thousand times, I will not reply with even one vulgar word." Both of them kissed his feet and reconciled."

INCIDENT THREE

Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Hadith Maulana Zakariyya Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) rebuked one servant of his who then sought forgiveness. Hazrat said, "You are always troubling me. For how long should I bear this attitude of yours?" Hazrat Maulana Ilyas Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) was sitting close by. He whispered into his ear, "Moulana, to the extent which you want AllahTa'ala to forgive you, forgive His servant's faults in this world."

A beautiful and Effective contemplation to cure Anger

When anger completely overcomes one, then immediately think,

If I control my anger right now and forgive, then Allah Ta'ala will, on the Day of Judgment, hold back His punishment from me.

This glad tiding is found in the narration of Hazrat Anas (Radhiallaho Anho).

Evil Glances, the Treachery of the Heart and the Worshipping of Beauty

Harms: Amongst the many evil character traits, this disease is extremely dangerous. In the early stages, its harms are not perceived. At the inception a man feels, that he is only amusing himself with these beauties. He is not getting anything from them, nor are they getting anything from him. This thought is a mere deception. By evil-glancing and filthy thoughts, not only is the heart affected, but also one's sperm begins thinning, health begins to deteriorate, the enjoyment of worship is snatched away, and one does not experience delight in his Zikr and worship. Some cases have lead to disastrous results. May Allah Ta'ala save us! Due to one person's evil glancing, the love of a beautiful woman penetrated into his heart to such an extent that even when he was told to repent, he said, "I repent from all sins. However, I will not repent from the extreme love which I have for my beloved." When he was told to recite the Kalimah, he said, "The pleasure of my beloved is more beloved and valuable to me than the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. (May Allah Ta'ala protect us). In this way, he left the world in a state of disbelief.

Shaytaan makes a concerted effort to involve salikeen (those treading the path to Allah Ta'ala) in these two sicknesses:

- 1. The trap of falling in love with women
- 2. The love of handsome boys

Note: At times, Shaytaan mesmerizes one's gaze so that even an ordinary looking person appears to be extremely good-looking. In every gaze, there are thousands of arrows and quivers hidden. Maulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has referred to this condition as 'tamwih.' This is a very dangerous condition. Hazrat Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has written whilst commenting on this word, "O Allah! Protect Ashraf Ali from this condition." He further writes, "When Allah Ta'ala, through His mercy, saves one

from this condition, then that condition is referred to as 'tambih.'

It is astonishing that some foolish people do not regard these things as sins. In their one hand, they hold a tasbih, but at the same time, they lustfully stare at women and young boys, whereas in the Shari'at, both these actions are prohibited (Haraam) and are major sins. The one who persists and continuously and persistently perpetrates this action is a transgressor and an open sinner. Such a person will not even gain a whiff of the fragrance of Allah Ta'ala's closeness.

Love affairs and evil glancing destroys physical as well as spiritual health. It causes one to become disgraced in this life and the hereafter. If this illness is found during one's student days, it weakens one's heart, mind and memory and eliminates knowledge from the heart. It deprives the seeker of religious knowledge from the blessings of knowledge and piety and leaves him eternally bereft of perfection and progress in knowledge and action.

Therefore, one should treat this illness with great concern, care, and determination. Never regard this poison as honey and never regard this cause of destruction to be a cause of happiness and joy. When Allah Ta'ala has commanded us to protect our gazes, how can there be any benefit and goodness in this action? Who can be more well-wishing than Allah Ta'ala for His servants? In short, evil glancing and love affairs are an extremely dangerous sickness, which destroy one's religious and worldly life. There is no space in this booklet for details. If you wish to study their harms in detail, then refer to this weak one's book "Remedies to Spiritual Maladies."

The Cure for Evil Glances and Illicit Love Affairs

According to every person's nature, this illness is found in different levels, some to a great extent and some to an even more severe level. Some become involved in this illness as soon as they attain maturity.

Reformation for Children

Therefore, parents should be concerned about saving their children from this illness from an early age. By destroying one's youth, one will inevitably be deprived of attaining the treasures of knowledge. From a young age, keep a careful watch over them. Keep them far away from cinemas, the television and evil company. Together with this, instill within them the fear of Allah and the punishment of the fire of hell. Occasionally, take them to the gatherings of the pious. As far as possible, do not let your children out of your supervision. Whilst they are young, abstain from leaving them and journeying out of the country without severe need. Due to the father's absence, children very quickly become liberated. They cannot be controlled by the mother and become careless. Continue making fervent dua to Allah Ta'ala to grant one's children piety. Recite this dua'a after every Fardh Salaah,

Keep your children engaged in different permissible activities. By being occupied, one is protected from many satanic traps.

Reformation for those who are Mature

1.) Make a habit of doing some Zikr daily. If there is any pious man in your locality, then consult with him. Otherwise, recite Durood Sharif 300 times, la ilaha ilAllah 100 times and Allah, Allah- 100 times. One should daily recite a portion of the Qur'an and be punctual in offering Ishraq, Awwabeen and Tahajjud. If one is unable to awaken in the last portion of the night, then one should perform two or four rakaats Nafl after performing the sunnats of Isha Salaah, before witr, with the intention of Tahajjud. By punctuality in Zikr, recitation of the Qur'an and performance of optional prayers, light will be created in the heart. The light of Truth (Allah Ta'ala) cools the fire of desires. Maulana Rumi

(Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "The fire of the sensual desires of the Nafs can only be cooled by the Light of Allah Ta'ala.

Note: One important point is that some people practice on the demands of sin, desiring thereby to weaken it. They feel that by committing the sin, this desire and demand of sin will lessen. This is a clear deception. With every sin, the desire to commit sin only increases. There is a decrease for only a short while. Thereafter, the flame rises even more than before. The thought of lessening sin by sin is like one who washes stool with urine, thinking that the impurity of the stool will be lessened. Such people always remain perplexed and will never become pure from sin. Therefore, muster courage and do not give in to the demands of sin. If at times, one becomes overpowered and he misuses his eyes, then he should at least perform four rakaats of Nafl salaah, give some charity and repent remorsefully and earnestly.

2.) When the desire to sin arises within one, then muster courage, make dua'a intensely, perform two rakaats of Salaatul Hajaat and seek Allah Ta'ala's protection. Engage yourself in some permissible and good works, enjoy a visit to a friend, or involve yourself in buying goods and other necessities for your wife and children. In this way, the inclinations and sharpness of the mind and thoughts of the Nafs will be weakened. It will soon become overpowered and become almost non-existent. This prescription is very beneficial. Hazrat Khawajah (Azizul Hasan) Saheb (Majzûb) (Rahmatullah Alaihe) composed this advice in poetic form. These are all the advices of Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe),

3.) Do not be frightened of undergoing this mujaahadah (striving).

Be prepared to bear this sorrow for your whole life. This is what true love is all about- that you should place the neck of your every evil desire under the sword of Allah Ta'ala's command! You should happily bear whatever difficulty there is in not allowing yourself to sin and in protecting your eyes. This is really a martyr who has given up his life in Jihad-e-Akbar (the greater jihad). Even though he is alive, he is continuously tasting from the eternal draught of martyrdom.

I am being slaughtered by the sword of your commandment My martyrdom is not in indebted to a dagger.

To become a martyr once under the sword of a disbeliever is comparatively easy. In this great jihad, one is forced to waver the sword of Allah Ta'ala's commands over one's evil desires his entire life.

Perfection of love is not to die, but to live dying (i.e. breaking your desires)

Oh, the moth is not as yet aware of this secret.

- 4.) To be totally cured of this illness, one should remain under the supervision of some friend of Allah Ta'ala. Such spiritually sick people must remain for a while in the company of a perfect guide who follows the Sunnah, has piety and has been given permission to initiate others into the pact of beit by another experienced Shaikh, until one attains a special connection with Allah Ta'ala in the heart referred to as nisbat-e-batni. By attaining a connection with Allah Ta'ala, it becomes very easy for a salik to protect his Nafs.
- 5.) Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has given a 2 point prescription for saving oneself from all sins.
- a.) Before sinning, prevent your Nafs with all your strength and

ability.

- b.) If you sin due to the evil of your Nafs, then repent with a sincere heart.
- 6.) Continue beseeching for one's protection in the Divine court by making dua'a earnestly and humbly. Keep the place of your Sajdah wet with your tears. If you cannot cry, then imitate the form of a crying person. Dua'a is a great bounty and a means of attaining Allah Ta'ala's mercy and grace. Only by the grace of Allah Ta'ala can a servant be protected from sins and can he fulfill the Divine commands. Hazrat Maulana Rumi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has said, "O Allah! If thousands of traps of sins are in front of us, but Your grace is with us to assist us, then we have no worry." He also has said, "Due to not having the kindness and grace of Allah Ta'ala on his side, the one hunting the deer becomes entrapped in the jaws of the boar." Therefore, never be proud of one's piety and abstinence. Be afraid at all times. Continue making dua and crying to Allah Ta'ala for protection. Never look towards your own strength. Regard your success to be based on crying and beseeching Him. If Allah Ta'ala removes His grace, kindness and assistance, then a pious person as firm as an elephant and a lion will also slip and be destroyed. On the other hand, if Allah Ta'ala makes His grace and kindness our protector and consoler, then a salik as weak as a mosquito will be honored and bestowed with the highest stages of divine closeness. One will see the animal of Nafs and the schemes and plans of Shavtaan bolting away in front of the lion-like courage of this person, just as deer, cheetahs and many huge horned animals like stags run wildly when they see a lion.
- 7.) Shaytaan makes a person feel despondent with regards to this illness. When a Salik, despite spending a period of time in Zikr, contemplation and companionship with the friends of Allah Ta'ala, still perceives within himself the evil demands of his Nafs, he begins to think, "I cannot traverse this path." This is not a path of eunuchs but it is rather the path of men. To refrain from acting

on the dictates of sin is referred to as taqwa (piety). If these desires were not present, then how would taqwa (piety) come into existence? Therefore, do not be perplexed, even if you have to strive and make effort your entire life. However, this struggle will gradually become easier. But, if by not abstaining from evil glancing, and if once again the desire becomes strong and leads to agitation, then this is your fault. The path is not difficult. You have made it difficult. In any case, in all conditions, do not lose courage. Khawajah Azizul Hasan Majzûb Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has beautifully stated,

If you cannot defeat the wrestler of the Nafs
Then do not leave your hands and feet loose (do not give up)
You have to fight it (Nafs) your whole life
Sometimes it flattens you and sometimes you flatten it.

Sometimes, Shaytaan makes people lose hope by whispering to them, "What will a person like you attain who has broken his repentance over and over? Such unworthy people like you will remain deprived of His high court. This is the path of pious people." The answer to this doubt is that undoubtedly, the breaking of our repentance is a very great sin. However, we do not have any other sanctuary; we do not have any other deity. No matter where we go, there is no other sanctuary for us besides Allah Ta'ala. If He is only the Rabb (Creator) of the pious, then is there another Rabb for us sinners to whom we can turn? We are also His servants. We will repent and cry before Him, till we make Him happy.

Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "If the one who repents is not raised up with the perfect ones, he will definitely be raised with the repenters, Insha-Allah." The following words appear in the Hadith Sharif, "O Allah, nothing

can hold back Your favors." Then why should one become despondent? Continue beseeching Allah Ta'ala for His mercy. Whatever you receive, you will receive only by Allah Ta'ala's grace. This advice is to save one from despondency, and is not meant to make one audacious to commit sin. One should fear disobeying Allah Ta'ala just as one fears a snake and a scorpion. Continuously make earnest dua for your own reformation and continuously ask your friends, elders and especially your spiritual guide and Shaikh to make dua for this also.

It is sufficient for just one lamentation of ours to reach there (to Allah Ta'ala)

Even though we engage in many lamentations and appeals

This means that the day one request or one dua is accepted, our work will be accomplished. Otherwise, our every dua'a and cry definitely reaches there. Here 'reaching there' refers to acceptance.

8.) The most effective and successful cure is to establish a connection with some spiritual guide. Inform him of all your conditions relating to your reformation. Whatever he proposes, practice upon it from your heart and soul.

Evil Thoughts and its Cure

Harms: By this illness, other illnesses like enmity, hatred, pride jealousy and backbiting comes into being. When any evil thought occurs to regarding any matter or person, then immediately think, "I will have to present a proof and evidence on the Day of Judgment to back this evil thought. We do not possess any definite proof and evidence, so why should we fall into this dispute? Why don't we rather think good thoughts so that we can continue receiving reward without proof and without evidence? Those people who carry tales from one place to another, creating enmity and hatred amongst the Muslims are referred to as talebearers.

The cure for him is to catch him by his hand and take him to the person concerned. Ask the person, "This person is narrating this speech of yours to me." If it turns out to be false, then he will never carry tales again. If it is true, then the person concerned will feel ashamed and seek your pardon. He will then not possess the courage to backbite about you.

Twenty evils of the tongue

Imam Ghazali (rahimahullah) has written that there are twenty evils of the tongue:

- 1. Speaking futile speech
- 2. Speaking more than necessary.
- 3. Narrating non-sensual tales of sinners and wrong-doers.
- 4. Debating
- 5. Fighting
- 6. Tasannu' To talk with airs and in an unnatural manner
- 7. Swearing
- 8. Being foul-mouthed and uttering disrespectful words to one's elders
- 9. Cursing- this habit is found greatly in women.
- 10. Singing songs and poems contrary to the Shari'at
- 11. Excessive laughter
- 12. Speaking in such a manner that others are belittted.
- 13. Exposing someone's secrets
- 14. Making false promises
- 15. Speaking lies. However, if one lies to make peace between two Muslims or if an oppressed person speaks lies so that he can receive his right, then this is permissible.
- 16. Back-biting- this means to speak in someone's absence such words that if he were present he would dislike it, even if it be true. This action is forbidden. The good actions of those who backbite will be snatched away and given to the other person.
- 17. Carrying tales
- 18. Praising or flattering someone in his presence. However, if

- there is no fear of pride entering his heart by your praises, but rather it will encourage him to do more good actions, then there is no harm.
- 19. Not to be concerned of finer errors in one's speech (e.g. many people say, "Hazrat, whatever dua emerged from your mouth will definitely be accepted, or "Allah is our support above and you are our support on earth." All of this type of speech is shirk (polytheism).
- 20. General public asking the Ulama such questions which have no relationship with their necessities i.e. to waste their time in futile and unnecessary questions.

Cure:

The cure for all the ailments of the tongue is that one should always think before speaking. Whatever I want to say, will my Master and Sustainer be happy with it or not? If one feels that His Master will be happy, then speak, and if there is fear that He will be displeased, then remain silent. Shaikh Sa'adi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has said, "Do not speak without thinking, even if you have to keep silent for a while. Why should you be sad if, after keeping quiet for a while, you can then utter beneficial speech?

NARRATIVE: Once during severe drought, thre was a sudden huge downpour of rain. A pious man remarked, "Today Allah Ta'ala has sent down rain at the right time." He received the following inspiration, "O disrespectful one! Did We ever send down rain at any wrong time? He immediately began weeping and with great regret, repented. One should be very cautious regarding one's speech.

Riya (Ostentation) and its Cure

Meaning: To perform good actions with the aim of showing people and with the desire to gain praise and honor is referred to as show and ostentation. In Arabic, it is called riya.

Harms: On the Day of Judgment, noble actions which were done for show will be a cause for punishment in the Hell fire, instead of being a means of gaining reward. However, before death, if one repents, then there is hope of being forgiven.

This showing off is of many types: 1.) At times, a person verbally shows off, "Today, we have given so much charity." We woke up at night and performed so many rakaats of Tahajjud. That is why I am so tired today." "I am gifting you this tasbih, which I brought on my second Haji." In this way, the reward of two Hajj is destroyed in one sentence. 2.) At times, one does not utter anything verbally. In front of people, he sits with his eyes closed and with his head bowed low so that all can understand that he is a great pious person who lives by the Arsh (Divine Throne) and only outwardly has relationship with the world, whereas he is head-to-toe drenched in the love of this world. At times one shows his eyes to be tired so that others can know that he was awake the whole night, and sleep is now overpowering him. 3.) Another form is when one lengthens his ruku and sajdah in his Nawafil (optional salaahs) in the presence of someone so that he will think that this person is a great saint. All these sicknesses of show are created by the desire for attaining honor in the eyes of the creation.

Cure for Riya

1.) The cure for this is to ponder that we will not remain here forever, nor will the creation whom we show our good actions for name and honor remain here forever. All of us will become dust in the grave. Only the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala will be of benefit to us. In Mirqat, the commentary of Mishkaat, Mulla Ali Qari (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has written that when Zubaidah, the wife of Haroun Rashid, the Khalifah in Baghdad, passed away, then a pious man saw her in a dream. He asked her, "How did Allah Ta'ala deal with you? She replied, "I was forgiven." He asked, "Was it due to your social welfare work?" She replied,

ذلك كله الى أربابه

No, all of that went to its lords. Our forgiveness was due to the blessings of noble intentions.

This means that in her social welfare work, due to also desiring honor, fame and name, all of these actions have gone to these false deities. All of these actions came to no benefit. For this reason, Allah Ta'ala's special servants, despite performing righteous actions, fear if it is accepted or not. My spiritual guide, Hazrat Shah Abdul Ghani Phulpuri (Rahmatullah Alaihe) used to say, "Continue doing (good actions) and fearing (whether it is accepted or not)"

- 2.) This weak servant (the author), makes this dua, "O Allah! Forgive our righteous actions which have become mingled with show and other evils, etc. due to our Nafs by Your mercy."
- 3.) A dua has been prescribed in the Hadith Sharif for protection from show. Read this in abundance. There is hope that Allah Ta'ala will protect us from this sickness by the blessing of this dua. This dua'a is,

O Allah! I seek Your protection from having knowingly some other objective other than seeking Your pleasure in Your worship, and I seek forgiveness for that actions of show which I have done unknowingly.

May Allah Ta'ala grant all of us sincerity.

4.) I would like to mention one point of experience, which all Mashaikh have also written: The wealth of sincerity will be attained through the company and service of the friends of Allah Ta'ala. The companionship of the friends of Allah Ta'ala is a very important and necessary act of worship, by which sincerity is infused into all forms of one's worship.

Backbiting

Meaning: This refers to speaking ill of any Muslim or anything related to him in his absence e.g. his children, vehicle or house. This may be verbal, by hand signs e.g. making a hand-sign that he

is short, by eye-signs which indicate to some-one one-eyed or blind, by bending one's back alluding to someone's hunchback, or by raising one leg and walking referring to someone's limp. In short, it is to make mention of your brother in such a way that had he been present, he would be upset and saddened. Thus, when you speak about any person, think first that, if he was present here, would he be pleased or displeased with my speech. If your heart feels that he will be displeased, then this is back-biting, even if what is said is true. If the speech is not true, then this is referred to as *buhtaan* (slander) and this too is prohibited.

Some people make mention of a person's house, vehicle, wife or children in such a way that, if he was present, he would have felt bad due to his special connection with them. This is also backbiting. However, with the intention of reformation, if one informs parents of their children, teachers of their students or spiritual guides of their *Mureed* (disciples) then this will not be backbiting. Similarly, if one comes to know of someone intending to cause harm to somebody else then to inform him with this intention that he will be saved from harm is necessary and this is actually a form of having concern for your Muslim brother.

Harms: A Hadith states that back-biting is more severe than fornication. The ulama have stated that the reason for this is that fornication is amongst Allah's rights. If one seeks forgiveness and repentance from Allah Ta'ala, there is hope of being forgiven. However, back-biting is a fellow human's right. As long as the person does not forgive, the backbiter will not be forgiven. Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "Backbiting is the father and son of enmity." This means that at times, by backbiting, enmity and hatred is created and at times enmity was originally there. Then a person begins to backbite. We can understand how evil this sin is because the person's lineage is so despicable that he is the father and the son.

Today, there is hardly any gathering in which backbiting is not found. Never mind the general masses, even the Ulama and the elite are involved in it. For this reason, Hazrat Hakeem-ulUmmah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has with great emphasis encouraged leaving of this sin.

Expiation: If one is granted the ability, then he should seek forgiveness from those whom he has backbitten. However, if that person is not aware of this backbiting, and by seeking forgiveness from him and informing him, there is a fear of causing him sorrow and creating hatred and enmity in his heart, then make a firm and sincere intention, "I will not backbite in the future." Praise him, especially in the gathering of those people in front of whom you had spoken evil of him. Accept your error and make dua'a for him. Recite some portion of the Quran or at least recite surah Ikhlas thrice daily for some period of time and convey the rewards to those whom you had spoken ill of. There is hope that, on the Day of Judgment, Allah Ta'ala will ask those people to forgive this sin. When these people themselves see the reward sent to them in their book of deeds, then they will feel pity and forgive. However, do not make conveyance of this reward an excuse to backbite. Allah Ta'ala knows well the intention within the heart. At times, there is fear of an evil end due to backbiting regarding accepted servants of Allah Ta'ala. Nobody can judge who is accepted by Allah Ta'ala. At times, a person outwardly appears to be a simple ordinary Muslim. However, some of his actions done in solitude have caused him to reach a lofty status in the sight of Allah Ta'ala. Similarly, the converse also holds true. On the Day of Judgment, many people walking today will be on conveyances and many on conveyances today will be seen walking. May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the ability to honor all Muslims and abstain from backbiting. Ameen

Cause: Backbiting is generally caused by evil thoughts regarding others and pride. If one is concerned about himself, then his gaze will not fall upon the faults of others. Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "Whoever has concern regarding his evil condition, then, at all times, he will fear Allah Ta'ala regarding himself so much that never mind Muslims, he

will regard himself worse than disbelievers and animals. Hazrat Sa'di Shirazi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said,

The friends of Allah Ta'ala, due to fear of their result on the plains of Resurrection, do not regard themselves better than even dogs. The reason for this is that a person who has an evil end, even dogs and pigs are better than him, since there is no punishment in hell for them. It is due to this servitude and annihilation of themselves that they even surpass angels in honor, since Allah Ta'ala desires humbleness, servitude and annihilation from His servants. There, strength will be of no avail to anyone. By shedding tears, one's work will be accomplished. This is the crux of sulook and Tasawwuf. In fact! Whoever possesses such humility, he will show compassion to all of creation, not cause harm to anyone, and will not take revenge. Allamah Abdul Qasim Qushairi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has written, "A person who takes revenge, becoming overpowered by the fervor of revenge, can never be a friend of Allah Ta'ala. A friend of Allah Ta'ala is he who is forebearant and who continues making dua for those who vex and trouble him. Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Saheb Partabgarhi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) has composed this amazing couplet,

Whoever has broken my heart into bits by his oppression and harm Ahmad has also made dua for him from the recesses of his heart.

Some people are quite advanced and particular about Ishraq, Awwabeen, Zikr, muraqabah (meditation) and *tasbihaat*. However, if someone causes them any difficulty or some matter occurs contrary to their temperament, they then place their *tasbih* in their pockets and blurt out obscenities and vulgar language. Then, they do not even bother who they are addressing: Is this our elder or junior? They forget whether it is their parents, teacher or Shaikh. It is regarding such people that this statement is well known.

At one moment, they are Auliya, at another they are beasts

Whoever keeps before himself the anger of Allah Ta'ala at all times forgets his own anger. To use one's anger for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala is only achieved after annihilating the Nafs. Hazrat Umar (Radhiallaho Anho)'s anger before accepting Islam was used against Islam. However, by the nurturing of Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) and due to the blessings of his company, this anger was then used against the disbelievers and hypocrites. Today also, if a person's anger is reformed, then he will become angry on his Nafs when trying to abstain from sin. He will forgive the errors of Allah Ta'ala's creation. He will show compassion and mercy to them. He will compel his Nafs to respect the elders, have compassion on the young and honor the Ulama. By practicing on this for a period of time, although it might be difficult initially, it will become a habit and natural characteristic in one.

Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) said, "You probably have not seen a person who is sentenced to be hanged backbiting about a person caught for a minor crime. You probably have not seen a person suffering from leprosy, laughing at one who has a cough. Therefore, those whose gaze is on the frightening accounting of the Day of Judgment and his final result will not laugh or backbite others. Neither will he have the time nor courage to do so. My poem is,

نامناسب ہے اے دلِ ناداں اک جزامی ہنسے زکامی پر

Truly inappropriate it is O foolish heart

For one suffering from leprosy to laugh at one with a common cold.

Speaking Lies

Harm: Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Always be truthful. Verily truthfulness guides a person to good actions, which leads him to paradise. Abstain from lying. Lies guide a person to wrong-doings, which leads him to hell."

Note: Some people speak lies just to make others laugh. Such people are actually preparing the means of crying for themselves

on the Day of Judgment just because they want to make others laugh.

Vulgar Language

Harm: When anger overcomes one, then at times, even some learned people and some who are engaged in Zikr, meditation and worship become vulgar in their speech. Vulgarity in speech is contrary to self-honor, shame and dignity. A person should ponder: how can we use the same mouth which we use to recite Quraan, to recite Durood Sharif and to take the pure name of Allah Ta'ala, to utter such impure words. This habit cannot be found in any pious and honorable person.

Cure: This illness generally occurs when one is overpowered by anger. Therefore, the cure for this is the same as that for anger. Use your courage. Save yourself from disgrace and embarrassment. Visualize that Allah Ta'ala is listening- Allah Ta'ala is listening to my foolish utterances. On whomsoever you have wrongly become angry, sworn or used foul language, hold his feet and seek his forgiveness, no matter how much one's Nafs feels disgraced. Ponder that the difficulty here is much less that the difficulty of hell. Whenever this type of error occurs, give some money in charity so that the Nafs feels some sorrow. Stipulate for oneself a penalty of some rakaats of Nafl Salaah. Stay in the company of honorable and respectable people who do not use such speech. Continue beseeching Allah Ta'ala for your reformation. Insha-Allah, by mustering courage and by the blessings of dua, this illness will be expelled.

Harshness

Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Allah Ta'ala loves softness and He grants, due to softness, such bounties which He does not grant on harshness." In another Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallellaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "The person who is deprived of softness is deprived of all goodness."

Not Forgiving People's Mistakes

This is also a sign of harshness and a hard heart. Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "If a person seeks forgiveness from his Muslim brother and he does not accept, then he should not come to me at my pond of Kawthar." This means that if someone wrongs you and then asks for forgiveness, you should forgive him.

Not Speaking to Another

Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "It is not permissible for a Muslim to stop speaking to his Muslim brother for more than three days. If he dies in this condition, he will go to hell." This refers to one who stops speaking due to some worldly reason.

Promises and Trusts

Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam) said, "There is no Imaan for he who has no trust. There is no religion for him who does not fulfill his pact."

Here, the main evil qualities have been mentioned. By the blessings of abstaining from these, Insha-Allah all one's evil qualities and traits will be reformed.

An Important Advice of Hazrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe) regarding one's Shaikh

If a person has remained for a considerable period of time in the company of a Shaikh (spiritual guide) and he has not felt any effect by his company, then he should seek the company of a different Shaikh. The reason for this is because the actual aim is Allah Ta'ala's Being, and not the Shaikh. However, one should not harbour evil thoughts of the first Shaikh. It is possible that he has attained perfection in this field, but one's share was not allotted to

him. Similarly, if one's Shaikh passes away before achieving the objective or the Shaikh does not give time to his Mureed, then too one can search a different Shaikh. One should not think, "What is the need for another Shaikh? I will attain faidh (spiritual benefit) from the grave of my Shaikh." This is because the benefits of teaching and reformation cannot occur from the grave. Only a person who has already acquired a deep connection with Allah Ta'ala with regards to his condition (from the faidh of the Shaikh who has already passed away).

Necessary Note

However, to leave the Shaikh due to greed, evil thoughts or being treated harshly or reprimanded from the Shaikh is clear deprivation. There is a fear of one's connection with Allah Ta'ala being severed. Such a person will become famous as a rolling stone. He will be deprived of the blessings of the path. May Allah Ta'ala grant us sound understanding, humility and servitude. Ameen.

Since the Shaikh is a complete Khalifah and deputy of Rasulullah (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam), one must show utter love and respect to him. One should think, "For me, there is no one better who can benefit me more than my spiritual guide." This has been stated by Shaikh-ul-Arab Wal Ajam Hazrat Hajee Imdadullah Muhaajir Makki (Rahmatullah Alaihe).

Finally, I will mention the crux of this path. He who does not annihilate his Nafs will not attain anything. By annihilating oneself and living with humility and submissiveness, one will attain the honor of both worlds. Hazrat Khawajah Saheb (Rahmatullah Alaihe) was a man of great status and honor. Then too, he said to his Shaikh Hazrat Thanwi (Rahmatullah Alaihe),

"I have brought only one desire to your door, Annihilate me, annihilate me, I have come to be annihilated."

May Allah Ta'ala, due to His graces, accept this booklet, and make it beneficial. Ameen. A request to our honorable readers for duas that Allah Ta'ala, by His mercy grant us and all readers the ability to practice. Ameen.

(Hazrat Maulana) Muhammad Akhtar (Damat Barakaatuhum) 6 Dhul-hijjah 1399 A.H

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